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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, May 5, 2008, at 12:30 p.m.

Senate

FRIDAY, MAY 2, 2008

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable SHELTON WHITEHOUSE, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lord God, we know not what a day may bring, for we borrow our heartbeats. Remind us that each day is Your gift to us and an opportunity to serve. Keep us from treating any day and its duties with indifference. Make us aware that no period of life is time wasted when we do Your will.

Encourage the Members of this body. Remind them that "those who are faithful in little are also faithful in much." Keep them from becoming distracted by the dream of doing great things when they ought to be busy with the task before them.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable SHELTON WHITEHOUSE led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 2, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3 of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable SHELTON WHITEHOUSE, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

In my capacity as a Senator from Rhode Island, I note the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REPUBLICAN OBSTRUCTIONISM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on occasion the Senate must turn to legislation we know will cause controversy: abortion, Social Security, always the war in Iraq, to name a few things that always cause controversy. Sometimes we find common ground on these; other times, after thoughtful, earnest debate, the two sides cannot converge in the middle.

That is okay. But that is how this body was designed to work by the Founding Fathers. So I offer the words that will follow with an understanding that as majority party we cannot expect the Republicans to agree with us on everything. And when the legitimate pursuit of compromise eventually leads to a dead end, we accept that outcome and move on to the next challenge.

But again and again this session our Republican colleagues have refused to work with us at all. They have rejected the difficult but critical job of legislating in favor of the easier but hollow path of obstruction and political gamesmanship.

Sixty-eight times and counting since the beginning of this session the Republicans have filibustered legislation. That means that 68 times the Republicans have stopped us from even debating, even negotiating, even working on legislation for the American people. Think about that, 68 times. That is about once a week if you consider the days and the weeks we are out of session.

Filibustering is far different from voting against a bill. I have no gripe, we have no gripe, with any Senator

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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